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ABSTRACT

The Minority Outreach Project, conducted by the Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education in Flint, Michigan, developed and implemented a model to reach and involve Black parents of handicapped students in their child's education. Project components included research, outreach, and model development. Outreach strategies developed included involving local pastors, use of press releases and flyers sent home with students, meetings with principals and teachers, a project public relations package, initial and follow-up letters to parents, provision of home based services, and training of church leaders. Additionally, 24 previously non-participating parents were interviewed in informal home sessions which indicated nonparticipating parents found inconvenient meeting schedules, lack of transportation, and lack of understanding of the process formidable barriers to full participation. Individual assistance, training, and information/referral services were provided by the project to 162 parents and 62 professionals. Two workshops for parents and one for church leaders (total participation N=44) resulted in positive evaluations. The model was developed from effective outreach strategies (individual contacts by the outreach worker), identification of barriers to parental participation, and use of effective assistance techniques (such as one-on-one contacts by the outreach worker and involvement of churches and community agencies). (DB)

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FINAL REPORT

"Reaching and Involving Black Parents of Handicapped Children In Their Child's Education Program"

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MINORITY OUTREACH PROJECT

If YOU don't care, who will?

C.A.U.S.E.

CITIZENS ALLIANCE TO UPHOLD SPECIAL EDUCATION

EC 211 869

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March 1, 1988

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I. Background and Objectives

A. Introduction and Background

The Minority Outreach Project is a cooperative program of The Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education (CAUSE) and the Flint Community School's Special Education Services Department. CAUSE is a statewide organization comprised of parent/consumer and provider organizations: Association for Retarded Citizens/MI, Michigan Alliance of School Physical and Occupational Therapists, Michigan Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities, Michigan Association of Learning Disabilities Educators, Michigan Association of School Psychologists, Michigan Association of Teachers of Emotionally Disturbed Children, Michigan Education Association, Michigan Federation of Teachers, Michigan School Social Workers Association, Michigan Society for Autistic Citizens, Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Physically Impaired Association of Michigan, Teacher Consultants of Michigan, and United Cerebral Palsy Association of Michigan. The Mission of CAUSE is: "The Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education shall advocate for the development of an educational system that guarantees all students with handicaps a free appropriate education that is designed to meet their maximum potential in the least restrictive environment. Further, CAUSE shall promote the **ideal** that all education is "special" and strive to eliminate the separations or limitations associated with this term. Additionally, CAUSE shall obtain the resources (financial and otherwise) necessary to achieve its goals and provide a forum where advocates for consumers and providers can educate and inform in order to influence public policy and practice." CAUSE also serves as the state Parent Training and Information Center funded through a grant from the United States Department of Education, Office of Special and Rehabilitation Services, Division of Personnel Preparation. CAUSE and the Flint Community School's Special Education Services Department share the goals of developing a full partnership between educators and parents of children and youth with handicaps.

Results of the State of Michigan Parent Monitoring Survey for the Flint Community Schools during the 1981-82 school year revealed that 80% of Flint parents of handicapped children had never attended a meeting with other parents of a handicapped child and indicated that these parents would like to attend such a meeting with other parents.

The City of Flint was selected as the site for the pilot project. Why Flint? The Flint Community Schools have worked with the "Parents Training Parents" program in the past and is very supportive of the project concept. Approximately 60% of the population of Flint is black, and there is a 12% unemployment rate. Flint is the home of Community Education and has a history of working with community groups in identifying and resolving problems.

Flint special education statistics reflect similar statistics as the state as a whole in special education in general. The Flint Community Schools, the second largest school district in the State of Michigan, have been providing services to handicapped students since 1935. Special Education Programs are available within 33 of the 37 elementary schools, six comprehension middle schools, and four comprehension high schools. Nearly 3,100 students with special educational needs are being served by the Flint Schools.

Of the total of 166,314 Michigan students receiving some type of special education services during the 1986-87 school year, 27,211 (17.6%) were black, nearly equal to their percentage representation in student enrollment in general.[1] However, black students are over-represented in classes for the educable mentally impaired and under-represented in learning disabled and hearing and language impaired categories. The Council Of Michigan Urban League Executives and the Michigan State Conference of NAACP Branches have both proposed that education of black parents is the means to correct some of the present inequities in our education system.[2]

The special education process has parent participation built into the Individual Educational Planning Committee (IEPC) process to bring parents and professionals together to plan for the needs of the student. This process is very intimidating for parents who are not aware of their rights, the system, jargon, and who may experience other barriers to participation. The Urban League Report also found that black parents want to be involved in decision making for their children, yet were not.[3]

After much research it was felt that the development and implementation of a model to reach and educate black parents of handicapped students could be the key to obtaining equal education opportunities for black students. This acted as the impetus for CAUSE to seek funding from the United Way of Michigan to fund the project.

B. **National Trends**

The 1987 Blueprint for Action II developed by The National Conference on Educating Black Children recommends the following actions for parents:

a. The development of models for parental involvement in the schools.

b. Encouragement of parents to take responsibility for their children.

c. Increased school and classroom visitations.

d. Concentrated building of community resources and support.[4]

The Evidence Continues to Grow: Parental Involvement Improves School Achievement, documented ". . . what many of us have suspected for a long time: the family provides the most important learning environment for children. If schools and families do not work together, children will not learn as effectively. If they are in conflict, children tend to fall behind and drop out."[5]

1 - Michigan Department of Education Statistics, 1982-1983
2 - Michigan NAACP, 49th Annual Convention, Flint, Michigan, September 6-8, 1985
3 - Council of Michigan Urban League Executives, 1985
4 - Michigan Department of Education, Michigan Monitoring Model, 1985
5 - "The Evidence Continues to Grow: Parental Involvement Improves School Achievement"

Summary

Based upon the needs of black parents of handicapped children and the uniqueness of Flint a grant was submitted to the United Way of Michigan - Venture Grant Program. The goal of the project was to develop and pilot a model to reach and involve black parents of handicapped children in their child's education.

The project was based upon the assumptions that:

a. Empowerment of parents is a means of changing the system.

b. Parent involvement will improve the child's education.

c. Home and school coordination will improve the child's scholastic achievement.

d. Service delivery through home based services is essential to support the family.

C. Project Objectives

The program goal was to develop and pilot a model to reach and involve black parents of handicapped students in their child's education. The specific project objectives were:

1. Selection of a community advisory committee composed of local agency representatives and community leaders.

2. Development of strategies using community leaders, agencies and churches to reach black parents of handicapped children.

3. Implementation of outreach strategies to reach black parents of handicapped students.

4. Use of informal interview techniques to help assess the barriers for black parents to participation in the Individualized Educational Planning Commmittee (IEPC) and Education processes and parent organizations.

5. Provision of individual assistance, trainings and information and referral services to black parents of handicapped children.

6. Development of a model based upon the pilot project which includes effective outreach methods, identification of barriers to participation in the IEPC and Education processes and parent organizations.

D. Outcomes

The anticipated results can be separated according to the project components:

1. **Research** - The research component provided two types of results. The first outcome was identification of strategies to reach black parents. The second result was identification of the barriers to participation in the Individual Education Planning Committee and education processes and parent organizations.

2. **Outreach** - The outreach component results were the provision of one-on-one assistance, training, information and referral services and case-work. It was estimated that the project would provide direct assistance to 200-300 parents. In addition, identification and recruitment of local black parents to participate in the "Parents Training Parents" Program as parent trainers and local resource parents completed the outreach component. The "Parents Training Parents" Program continued the effective strategies and the model outcomes to maximize program outreach efforts.

3. **Model Development** - The model development component results were the production of a model to reach black parents and provide assistance to help them participate effectively in the IEPC and education processes and increase their awareness of community agencies. The goal was to produce an effective model that could be replicated across the state and the nation. The "Parents Training Parents" Program continued the use of the model and the research to effectively reach black parents. The model was also disseminated to the Michigan Department of Education, United Way of Michigan, and the Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education (CAUSE) coalition for further dissemination to it's constituencies.

II. Accomplishment of Objectives

A. **Objective 1 - Selection of a community advisory committee.** Initially, the following persons were invited to be on the advisory committee:

1. Sherry Goodwin, Director of Special Education - Flint Community Schools

2. Shirlie Morgan, Parent Advisory Committee Chairperson - Flint Community Schools

3. Sybyl Atwood, Executive Director - Voluntary Action Center - Information and Referral

4. Marvin McKinney, Director Community Affairs - Mott Children's Health Center

5. Deborah Strong, Consultant - Michigan Department of Mental Health

6. Special Education Services - Michigan Department of Education

7. Concerned Pastors of Flint

8. Eileen Cassidy, Executive Director - Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education

9. Other Community Leaders and Agencies

Letters were sent out to 13 Community Agencies and leaders requesting their participation on the project's advisory committee. The following persons participated on the committee:

1. Sherry Goodwin, Director of Special Education - Flint Community Schools

2. Shirlie Morgan, Parent Advisory Committee Chairperson - Flint Community Schools

3. Marvin McKinney, Director Community Affairs - Mott Children's Health Center

4. Deborah Strong, Consultant - Michigan Department of Mental Health

5. Eileen Cassidy, Executive Director - Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education

6. Evelyn Harris, VISTA Volunteer, Voluntary Action Center - Information and Referral

7. Shirley Swegles, Consultant, Special Education Services - Michigan Department of Education

8. Vickie Huffman, Genesee County Health Department

The committee met on a monthly basis to plan and monitor grant activities. Meeting minutes and agendas are available on request.

B. Objective II - Development of strategies using community leaders, agencies and churches to reach black parents of handicapped children.

Strategies included the following:

1. Involve the Concerned Pastors of Flint

2. Press Releases (news and radio - specifically targeting religious radio shows)

3. Meeting with principals and teachers at target schools.

4. Flyers sent home with students.

5. Parent/Teacher conference day.

6. Develop project public relations package including logo and tee shirts.

7. Initial and Follow-up letters to parents.

8. Follow-up telephone calls to parents.

9. Handwritten letters to parents.

10. Home based services to build trust and rapport.

11. Participation in fair's at Housing Projects.

12. Training of church leaders to act as resources for families with a handicapped child.

C. **Objective III - Implementation of the strategies to reach black parents of handicapped children.**

The strategies used to reach parents in the initial stages were for the goal of assessing the parent perceived barriers to participation in parent organizations, and the IEPC and education processes. Initially, the strategies referenced in Objective II were employed not only to access hard-to-reach black parents, but also to allow the project to assess the barriers which black parents percieved as obstacles. The assessment of barriers was achieved through the use of informal interview techniques by the outreach worker. The interviews typically took place in the person's home, were very informal and were seen as a means of building trust and providing assistance as needed.

The strategies were further field tested in the second stage of the project to implement techniques to reach and involve parents in their child's educational program. The emphasis on parent/family involvement and it's impact on the student's achievement has been well documented in various studies. In particular, the importance of participation by parents of handicapped children as seen in their inclusion in planning their child's education jointly with the schools was highly stressed.

D. **Objective IV - To use informal interview techniques to help assess the barriers for black parents to participation in the IEPC and education processes and parent organizations.**

1. **Description of Sample** - Two schools were selected based on the following: support for the project by the school principal, socio-economic distribution, large number of black families, and representation of various handicapping conditions. The two schools were:

Dewey Elementary School
4119 North Saginaw Street
Flint, Michigan 48505

Brownell Elementary School
6302 Oxley Drive
Flint, Michigan 48504

An outreach worker was hired who was the parent of a child with special needs, black and had a good knowledge of community resources. She possessed the ability to work closely and build trust and rapport with parents and professionals.

The files from the two target schools were analyzed to identify black parents who had not attended IEPC's in the past 2-3 years. A population of 40 parents were identified. Of those 40, a nonscientific sample of 24 persons (60%) participated in the survey. The outreach worker attempted to contact parents through an average of 5-6 different methods. Typically, the reasons for failing to reach the other families in the population were that persons had moved or addresses were incorrect.

2. **Demographics of Sample** - Of the 24 parents who were interviewed, all were black. To provide a rough estimate of socio-economic status subsidized lunch data was used. Thirteen (57%) recieved free lunches, 6 (26%) paid full price, and 4 (17%) received reduced lunch prices. One parent did not provide school lunch data.

Children from families whose income is at or below the level shown on the following scale may be eligible for either free meals or meals at a reduced price. Also, households receiving Food Stamps or "Aid to Families with Dependent Children" are automatically eligible for the program.

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM - ELIGIBILITY

TOTAL FAMILY SIZE	INCOME YEARLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY
1	10,175	848	196
2	13,690	1,141	264
3	17,205	1,434	331
4	20,720	1,727	399
5	24,235	2,020	467
6	27,750	2,313	534
7	31,265	2,606	602
8	34,780	2,899	669
EACH ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBER	+3,515	+293	+68

The average age of the handicapped student was 11 with a range of 6-12 years of age. The sample included representation of parents with children having the following handicaps: Emotionally Impaired 12 (50%), Learning Disabled 7 (29%), Educable Mentally Impaired 4 (17%), and 1 (4%) Speech & Language Impaired. The average size of the household was 2.5 siblings with 4.8 other persons living in the home. Ninety-two percent of the families had relatives who lived in Flint. The sample seemed stable with participants living in Flint for an average of 21 years with only 37.5% of the families moving in the past year.

It should be noted that 9 (37%) parents believed they had attended the IEPC meeting even though school records indicated that they had not. The most likely interpretation of this result is that the parents reported attending the schools Parent-Teacher conferences not realizing the difference between the IEPC meeting and the Parent-Teacher conference.

3. **Description of Interview Instrument** - The interview instrument was developed by the advisory committee. It was field tested and modified. A copy of the instrument can be found in Appendix A.

4. **Description of Interview Methods** - The outreach worker conducted the interviews in the participant's home with 1 or 2 exceptions. The interviews lasted an average of 45 minutes to an hour. An informal method of questioning was used to help participants feel more comfortable.

5. **Results** - The results reported here are those which assist in answering a series of questions generated by the advisory committee. The summary of the data can be found in conjunction with the sample instrument in Appendix A.

   The first question was, **"What are the barriers to participation in the IEPC process?".** The most frequently cited barriers were scheduling (45.8%), followed by transportation (21%), and knowledge/understanding of the process (12.5%).

   The second question was **"What are the barriers to participation in trainings?".** The most frequently cited barriers were scheduling (36%) indicated a need to schedule trainings in the evening or after school, second and third were knowledge of the training (20%) and transportation (20%).

   The third question was **"What are the barriers to participation in parent organizations?".** Again, the data indicated that preferred scheduling for evenings or after school is the most frequently raised issue (44%) followed by knowledge of benefits to participation in parent organizations (20%).

   These results seem to imply that participation in IEPC's, trainings, and parent organizations could be increased by scheduling in the evenings and implementation of strategies to improve knowledge of the training and/or parent organization meetings.

   A second set of questions are descriptive in nature: They assess the barriers to IEPC participation based upon socio-economic status as measured by the parents participation in the school lunch program.

   Table 1 in Appendix A, indicates that irrespective of socio-economic status, scheduling was the largest barrier to **IEPC participation.**

   Table 2 in Appendix A, shows the frequency of the barriers to **participation in trainings** with school lunch data. These indicate that knowledge of training is the most frequent barrier for free lunch participants, scheduling for reduced lunch recipients and scheduling and transportation for full price lunch participants.

   Table 3 in Appendix A, shows the frequency of the **barriers to parent organization participation** as compared with school lunch data. These indicate that knowledge of benefits is the most frequently occurring barrier for free lunch participants, scheduling for reduced lunch recipients and also for full price lunch participants.

Other significant questions and findings include:

Do you know any other parents with a handicapped child?

Yes 8% No 92%

Are you affiliated with a church?

Yes 83% No 17%

Do you participate in a parent organization?

Yes 4% No 96%

Do you feel such an organization would be helpful to you?

Yes 75% No 4% Maybe 21%

When parent organization benefits were explained, parents responded that they would be interested in participation.

E. **Objective V - Provision of individual assistance, training and information and referral services to parents reached.**

1. **Individual Assistance - Demographics** - Individual Assistance was provided to 224 persons. 162 parents (72%) and 62 professionals (28%). The contacts were made in the following manner:

Mail	85	(38%)
Phone	75	(33%)
In-person	58	(26%)
Missing data	6	(3%)

The types of requests for assistance included:

Individual Assistance	136
Training/Workshop Information	23
Total	159

Of the persons using individual assistance services the request types were :

Other	83	61%
Information and Referral	42	31%
Request for Materials	8	6%
Identification	1	.66%
Individual Education Program	1	.66%
Non-Educational	1	.66%
	136	100%

2. **Follow-up Calls** - Follow-up evaluation calls were made to 8 of the Individual Assistance recipients, yielding the following data:

Are you a: Parent 6 Grandparent 2 Professional 0

How helpful was the information you recieved?

Very Helpful	2	25%
Helpful	6	75%
Not Helpful	0	00%

How helpful were CAUSE's suggestions and/or information?

Very Helpful	4	50%
Helpful	4	50%
Not Helpful	0	00%

Do you feel that you would have recieved the assistance you needed if CAUSE had not been available?

No	7	100%
Yes	0	0%

Has the information you recieved enabled you to obtain at least some of the services you feel your child needs?

Yes	5	71%
No	2	29%

What services have you had the least success in obtaining so far?

None	8	100%

General comments about CAUSE's Individual Advocacy Services.

Got alot of information that was very helpful. School does not give out this kind of information. I feel more comfortable and trust in the information Shirley Morgan gives me because Shirley is a parent of a handicapped child too, and she is not being paid to tell me what her boss wants her to.

Very helpful program, will call CAUSE and Shirley Morgan when need help again.

Program was helpful, I needed it before the program started. A good program.

Very important program. Great program. People to talk to and who to contact for help, etc. Found out many things I did not know. It is a real good thing that Shirlie and the program are doing.

Shirlie Morgan was so helpful and I am so glad she came along and explained everything to me. I did not understand any of it before.

Gave me good information and all was very helpful.

Very good program. The information provided by Shirlie Morgan and the program was very good.

3. **Workshops** - Three workshops took place during the project period, two were specifically for parents and one was for church leaders.

The two workshops for parents were:

TOPIC: Problem Solving and Communication Skills
DATE: May 27, 1987
PLACE: Brownell Elementary School

TOPIC: IEPC Process
DATE: May 19, 1987
PLACE: Dewey Elementary School

The church leaders workshop:

TOPIC: Reaching & Involving Black Parents with Handicapped Children In Their Childs Education
DATE: August 25, 1987
PLACE: Mott Children's Health Center

Total number of workshop participants 44.

4. **Workshop Evaluations:**

WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS:

Have you learned anything new from attending this workshop?

Yes, where to go and what to do for help and better understanding.

This is my first time to come to this workshop.

Yes, I have learned that I have all kinds of rights and it is possible for me to get the best for my child and I also know what an IEPC means.

Yes, if you want to learn you have to participate.

Yes, I have learned more from this meeting than any other about this program.

You help to open up parents who have some grievances and concerns.

Do you feel this training session will improve your ability to be an educational advocate for your child?

Yes, because I now understand more about the IEPC program.

Yes, I believe that this session may help me to work better with my child.

Yes, I believe it will help me understand a lot of things that I did not know, made it better for me to help my child.

Yes, I now have a better understanding of the rights of parents and advocates for the child and the process of how to make appropriate use of the IEPC to get the best programming for the child.

The best part of this workshop was:

I like the way that she explained things in detail and tried to make you understand each problem.

When you explained clearly what is going on and not give you a lot of horse wash.

The give and take of questions from the audience to deal with the specific problems of the parents and others at the meeting.

I learned that it was a nice program.

Segment on personal adjustment skills and recreation and leisure time activities. Parental input. Overheads were good.

A suggestion for improvement of this workshop is:

More parent participation.

Focus on more specific rules and step-by-step through the IEPC process - maybe even a mock (and shortened) IEPC.

More interaction with parents early. This improved as time went on (active participation). Thanks for helping here.

A suggested topic for an additional workshop:

Above suggestions of mock IEPC to take one step at a time through the process to model how it should happen would be good to help parents and others - be more assertive in IEPC.

In-depth handicapping conditions - the parents perspective, (AI, EI, EMI, LD, etc.).

WORKSHOP FOR CHURCH LEADERS EVALUATIONS:

Have you learned anything new from attending this workshop? (If yes, please specify)

Yes 100%

Many new resources that are available that I can pass the information on to others.

So many agencies or services available, where they are located and phone numbers.

That there are some people and agencies who care and are supportive.

I like the idea of involving churches in addressing needs of special children. It will also help in sensitizing churches. Parents need organizing and a sense of togetherness.

That the "red tape" for referrals has been removed. That workshops are available at the churches - GREAT!

Do you feel this training session will improve your ability to be an educational advocate for your child?

Although most programs available for "low income" families but I most certainly have become more educated to help others.

I don't have a child, but I feel I could impart what I know to help people who do.

Also to help others with special needs children.

The best part of this workshop was:

For me it was all the resources material I was able to take home with me. I have read the pamphlets and have in a file for "help" for others. (I even called a friend and passed on information to her to use with the 3 foster children she has.) I also appreciated hearing Mrs. Pratt so that others are informed what to do/say and not to do/say with families of handicapped children.

Well planned and presented! Total agenda. The handouts were greatly appreciated and helpful.

Sue Pratt speaking.

I especially enjoyed Sue and Shirley for sharing themselves. I also liked identifying resources already available.

Touching. Sue Pratt's personal story and all information presented was excellent.

A suggestion for improvement of this workshop is:

Have the same workshop a month later - probably all of us can think of a friend or family who would value by being there. We could attend with them.

Try again through the churches, maybe better attendance next time.

Get more ministers here.

A suggested topic for an additional workshop is:

Role Play - how to approach someone in your church that might need assistance of available services (probably covered in weekend retreat).

I really enjoyed it. Very informative! Keep stressing this information.

How to really reach the people who most need to know about these workshops.

5. **Follow-up Calls on Parent Workshops** - Follow-up calls were made to 15% of the workshop attendees and yielded the following:

Are you a: Parent 2 67% Professional 1 33%

Did the workshop meet your needs? Yes 3 100%

If so, how?

Understanding the whole system.

I knew practically nothing prior to the workshop and the workshop and materials have been very helpful.

Really pleased with it - information and atmosphere was very good. Didn't know anything about special education before the workshop - I wasn't happy with IEPC and learned I could call for another and I didn't have to wait a year for another IEPC.

Have you had the opportunity to use any of the materials that were in the workshop packet?

Yes 33%

To become more familiar with rights and advocacy for clients and for sharing with other parents.

No 67%

Not as yet, but I will be using it at the IEPC real soon.

Has your child recieved better services because you have put the workshop information to use?

67% - She will at upcoming IEPC.

33% - N/A but enabled me to advocate for clients which I was unable to do prior to the workshop.

If so, how?

Because we will deal with it at the upcoming IEPC and now I know her program has to meet her unique needs. Getting appropriate IEP and getting it implemented as written.

General Comments about workshop:

Has enabled me to begin to understand rights, special education and the new revised rules. CAUSE provides a very worthy service - please keep up the good work. I highly recommend CAUSE, a very helpful and needed workshop. Parents don't realize the help that is there for them from CAUSE. CAUSE has a very high quality program for parents. Keep up the good work.

In addition to the training of church leaders three black parent trainers from Flint were recruited and have completed one year as parent trainers for the project.

F. **Objective VI - Development of a model based upon the pilot project which includes effective outreach methods and identification of barriers to participation in the IEPC/education processes and parent organizations.**

The model strategies are separated into the following components:

1. **Outreach Methods** - The most effective outreach methods were those involving individual contacts by the outreach worker. The personal contacts built trust and rapport by providing an opportunity for parents to share information with another parent of a handicapped child. As the research indicates few of the parents had shared with another parent previously.

   Tee shirts and a bag of samples and brochures were provided to participating parents, compliments of Flint Community Schools and Mott Children's Health Center (see Appendix B, list of resource items). Additionally, Flint Community Schools developed the project logo and literature which increased the projects visability and community identification.

   The media was used extensively in the project this included both print and radio. The radio contact most successful was a Public Service Announcement aired during a religious broadcast by a community pastor.

   Participation of the churches in outreach seemed logical based upon the high level of church involvement evidenced through the interviews. A common thread between parents irregardless of socio-economic status was church participation. Training of church leaders to provide outreach services seemed both logical and effective. Churches were able to identify representatives who were trained by CAUSE on how to deal with parents of handicapped children, understand the education system, how parents can work with the schools and on available community resources. Church leaders indicated a need for more training and to reach larger numbers of church leaders for further outreach.

   Other successful strategies included: Contacts at local health fairs, housing project outreach and personal contacts from the outreach worker and through known school personnel.-

   Essential to the project's success was the cooperation and support from community agencies and specifically the Flint Community Schools. The schools provided access to information, training sites, materials, staff resources, project tee shirts, logo, financial assistance, and a local office.

2. **Identification of barriers to participation in the Individual Education Planning Committee and education processes and parent organizations.**

   The barriers to participation in the IEPC and education processes were identified as the following in descending order of importance:

   * Scheduling (needs to be in evening or after school)
   * Transportation
   * Knowledge/Understanding of the Process

To overcome these barriers our project implemented workshops to help parents understand and feel more comfortable with the IEPC and education processes.

The barriers to participation in trainings were:

* Scheduling (needs to be in evening or after school)
* Transportation
* Knowledge of Training
* Child Care

To overcome these barriers trainings were scheduled in the evenings, child care and transportation funds were made available by the schools and trainings were advertised through the media, local organizations, churches, and personal contacts by the outreach worker.

The barriers to participation in parent organizations were:

* Scheduling (needs to be in evening or after school)
* Knowledge of Benefits
* Other

To overcome these barriers we would recommend dissemination of benefits of parent organizations through the churches and community agencies that specifically reach or provide services in black communities.

3. **Assistance Techniques** - Assistance techniques which proved most successful were one-on-one contacts by the outreach worker. The outreach worker provided the assistance needed by the individual even if it didn't directly relate to their handicapped child (i.e., help with other agencies, etc.) This was essential in building trust. Additionally, there is a need for persons to accept that family survival (housing, food, etc.) is a higher priority then attending school meetings. As socio-economic status decreases other issues of greater magnitude come into play. There also appeared to be a level of trust in the schools which left many parents feeling that they were not needed at the IEPC meetings.

   Assistance through trainings was effective as attendees were satisfied but numbers were not as high as anticipated. Trainings were structured to allow parents to share as many indicated the importance and/or lack of such opportunity in the interviews.

   Involvement of the churches and community agencies serving black communities seems to be the most effective method coupled with a local outreach case worker who is black and the parent of a handicapped child.

   Involvement with the following local agencies is highly recommended.

   - Minister/Pastor Alliance
   - Urban Black
   - NAACP
   - Clubs or organization specifically for blacks
   - Black parent organizations

III. **Statement of Future Plans**

Since the grant ended the following has taken place:

1. Hiring of the outreach worker by the Flint Community Schools.

2. Presentations at the following conferences on outreach to black parents.

   * Michigan Association of Teachers of Emotionally DisturbedChildren Conference - May 8, 1987
   * Western Regional Resource Center - Technical Assistance to Parent Projects - Joint Minority Outreach Conference - Santa Fe, New Mexico - June 25, 1987
   * National Society for Autistic Citizens - Detroit - July 9, 1987
   * National Black Child Development Institute - Detroit - October 23, 1987
   * Mott Children's Health Center - January 25, 1988
   * Council for Exceptional Children Conference - March 9-12, 1988
   * Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association Conference - March 17, 1988
   * Michigan Association of Teachers of Emotionally Disturbed Children Conference - April 27-30, 1988

3. Planning and implementation of future workshops for church leaders.

4. Continuation of the advisory committee meetings.

5. Trainings in the evening and at local churches.

IV. **Study Recommendations**

Recommendations for areas of further research.

A. Lack of minority professional representation and its impact on the disproportionate number of minorities in special education.

B. Need to ascertain model's impact with other minority groups.

C. Implementation and impact of cultural sensitivity programs.

D. Cultural bias and social issue and no required cultural sensitivity course in personnel preparation.

E. Success of model replication with changing variables (i.e., outreach by whites to blacks).

F. Replication of the project in various settings (i.e., metropolitan and rural areas).

V. **Study Limitations**

The study should be analyzed with the following in mind.

* The sample size was small.

* For replication purposes, the outreach worker and administrators were black which may be in part responsible for its' success.

* The long range impact of the project has not been fully assessed.

TABLE 1

Barriers to IEPC Participation

Did you attend the last IEPC meeting?

No	15	63%
Yes	9	37%

What types of things would help you to participate in the IEPC process?

Scheduling	11	46%
Transportation	5	21%
Knowledge of Process	3	13%
Child Care	2	8%
Other	2	8%
Taking a Friend Along	1	4%

Are you aware that there is a parent advocate available to you?

No	23	96%
Yes	1	4%

****

TABLE 2

Barriers to Participation in Trainings

Have you ever attended a training on Special Education rules, laws, etc?

No	23	96%
Yes	1	4%

What types of things would help you to participate in such a training?

Scheduling	9	38%
Transportation	5	21%
Knowledge of Training	4	17%
Child Care	2	8%
Other	2	8%
Taking a Friend Along	2	8%

****

TABLE 3

Barriers to Parent Organization Participation

Are you now a member of a parent organization?

No	23	96%
Yes	1	4%

Do you feel that such an organization would be helpful?

No	2	8%
Yes	22	92%

What types of things would help you to participate in a parent organization?

Scheduling	10	42%
Knowledge of Benefits	5	21%
Other	4	17%
Transportation	3	12%
Child Care	2	8%
Taking a Friend Along	0	0%

APPENDIX B

RESOURCE LIST

IEPC Brochure

Mott Chilren's Health Center Bookmark

Flyer from Genesee-Lapeer-Shiawasee Chapter MACLD

Booklet "Information and Referral Service" from
Voluntary Action Center

Flyer from McCree Health Center

Phamplet from MACLD

Phamplet "A Parents' Guide to Sexuality Education" from
Education Department of Flint Community Schools

Phamplet "Choosing the Right Place to Care For Your Child"
from the Department of Social Services

Phamplet "A Guide to Children's Services in Genesee County"
and "Time Out! A Program For Parents and Children"
and "When It's Tough Being A Parent Call Warmline 233-4315"
and "When You Need Somebody Call Phone-A-Friend" from
Flint-Genesee County Community Coordinated Child Care Association

Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education (CAUSE) Brochure

Phamplet "Public Health: A Community Effort" from
Genesee County Health Department

Mott Children's Health Center Brochure

Phamplet "Project TRAIN: A Special Service for Families
of the Developmentally Disabled" from Family Service
Agency of Genesee County

Phamplet "Child Care Safety: Fact Book" from
Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning

Phamplet "Developmental Enrichment Clinic"
from McLaren General Hospital

Chart "A Guide to Your Child's Development - From Crib
to Kindergarten" from Project Find - Michigan
Department of Education

Phone Sticker for kids from "Phone-A-Friend"

Business Card from Voluntary Action
Center-Information and Referral Service

Artwork done
by
Mancine Broome
Graphic Artist
Flint Board of Education